

Part IX.

SUMMARY

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Operation Gun Tip was remarkable in the volume of firearms recovered in the span of just seven days. The program recovered 2,912 guns from the streets of a city that has significant restrictions on the possession of firearms.

More than 75% of the guns recovered (2,200) were handguns. The majority of these were revolvers (1,486). The guns were recovered at an average rate of 415 guns per day.

Many of the guns recovered are those that are normally recovered in standard police enforcement programs. Included in the recoveries were many firearms that are among the most frequently recovered in crimes and traced in America.

Because a large number of the recovered firearms were manufactured before the passage of the Gun Control Act of 1968, they could not be successfully traced. The rate of fully successful traces for the firearms for which trace results were received at the time of the study was approximately 17%. None of these firearms were traced back to a police department.

The successfully traced firearms had an average street age of 15.49 years. They were traced back to 44 states and Canada. The dealer responsible for the most traced firearms had been a licensed dealer in operation in the District of Columbia until approximately 11 years ago. All of the firearms traced back to that dealer had been sold before 1977.

The 1999 Gun Buy-Back program was responsible for the recovery of 63 firearms that had the serial numbers obliterated. Also as a result of the program, 45 guns that had been reported stolen were recovered and the reporting agencies notified.

More information on firearms tracing and the District of Columbia can be found on the ATF WebSite under the Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative and Operation Ceasefire at www.atf.treas.gov.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

(AS USED IN THIS REPORT)

Acquisition/disposition log: A log or bound book maintained by all FFLs which records the receipt (*date and source*) and disposition (*date and transferee*) of all firearms as well as a complete description of the firearm(s).

Crime Gun: Is any firearm that is illegally possessed, used in a crime, or suspected to have been used in a crime.

Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL): A person, partnership, or business entity holding a valid license issued by ATF under the authority of Title 18 USC chapter 44, that allows them to engage in the business of dealing (*and/or manufacturing, importing, repairing, or pawnbrokering*) firearms. All FFLs are required by law to keep records of their firearms transactions.

Firearm: Any weapon (*including a starter gun*) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive. In this report, starter guns (*blanks*) are separated from firearms for statistical purposes.

Firearms Tracing: The tracking of a recovered crime gun's history from its source (*either the manufacturer or importer*) through the series of transactions (*e.g., through wholesaler to retail dealer*) to the individual who purchased the firearm from the retailer.

Firearms Transaction Record/ATF Form 4473: The standard form, maintained by all FFLs, which is completed to document the transfer of a firearm(s) to an unlicensed individual. The form must be completed by both the purchaser (*transferee*) and the FFL. It contains full identifying information concerning the purchaser, the firearm, the date of transfer, and the FFL's license number.

Gun: A weapon or a facsimile of a weapon that shoots a projectile at a high velocity in a flat trajectory.

Market Area: An area where the effect or combination of effects of restrictive firearms laws and a ready market for illicit firearms sales and possession attract firearms from source areas.

Source Area: An area where firearms are sold that has been identified and the source for firearms recoveries by law enforcement. Source areas often have laws, sales environments and/or a proximity to Market areas that make them desirable for the acquisition of firearms for resale in the market areas.

Straw Purchase: The acquisition of a firearm(s) from a Federally licensed firearms dealer(FFL) by an individual (*the "straw"*) done for the purpose of concealing the identity of the true intended receiver of the firearm(s).

Time to Crime: Also referred to as street age, it is the period of time between a firearm's acquisition from an FFL and law enforcement's recovery of that firearm during use, or suspected use, in a crime.
